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ABSTRACT

Teachers calling on students to answer questions in class regarding homework assignments and general knowledge frequently invoke the Drama Triangle (Karpman, 1968). Many of these questions automatically put the teacher in the Persecutor or Rescuer role and students in the Victim role. Retaliatory transactions by students often put the teacher in the Victim role and students in the Persecutor role. The players switch about the Drama Triangle as the games are played. One way to end the game-playing involves the Classroom De-Gamer. This is a teacher-invented device which randomizes the question-and-answer process. The device consists of a "spinner" which lands on a number from 1-30. Students have been preassigned corresponding numbers, and the person on whose number the pointer lands must answer the question. All questions can be presented in advance if desired. The device has proved highly successful in the classes of its teacher/inventor. (Author/BP)

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THE CLASSROOM DE-GAMER

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THE CLASSROOM DE-GAMER

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Most homework questions, and many general knowledge or problem-solving questions, asked by teacners, are a form of test, and are Parent-Child transactions. Rebel and compliant Adapted Child behavior is often encouraged and reinforced by the questioning process.

The Classroom De-Gamer is a "roulette" device I have invented. It consists of a 3/4 inch-thick circular board twelve inches in diameter, painted green, with yellow numbers from 1-30 painted on at regular intervals around the circumference of the board. An arrow and a 1 inch piece of 1/4 inch-diameter copper tubing are affixed in the center of the board with a 10 penny nail. The copper tubing holds the arrow off the board so the arrow can be spun. The yellow point and tail of the green arrow are decorated with black and red splashes and stripes. The words "CLASSROOM DE-GAMER" are printed on the green board in yellow paint.

A patent has been applied for.

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To use the De-Gamer, I like to have students position their desks around the perimeter of the classroom, in the center of which I place the De-Gamer. I initially invite a student to get up from his/her desk and go to the center of the room and spin the arrow. The student the arrow lands on has the responsibility of talking about the assigned material. If specific questions are to be asked of pointed-out students, the questions are announced to the class as a whole before the pointing-out takes place. The student who initially spun the arrow sits back down, and the student who was initially pointed out spins the arrow the next time. And so it goes throughout the course.

A coke bottle, as in the non-psychological game of spin the bottle, works almost as well as the De-Gamer, if the classroom can be set up in circular formation. If the room must be set up in the sometimes-unavoidable row and column attack formation, however, then the coke bottle is not efficient or effective. Using the De-Gamer in a row and column classroom, each student is assigned a number, and whosever number gets landed on by the arrow has the responsibility of saying what's what.

There are lots of ways to spend time in classrooms. I think the Classroom De-Gamer cuts down on Persecutor, Rescuer, and Victim behavior in my classes. The De-Gamer is at first threatening to most students, and although it remains threatening, frustrating, and perhaps offending to some passive, highly script-bound students, I am convinced the De-Gamer makes my classes more fun and productive for response-able students. The De-Gamer is never spun very often, what with the excellent contributions many students volunteer.

REFERENCES

Karpman, S. Fairy Tales and Script Drama Analysis. Transactional Analysis Bulletin, 1968, III, 39-43.

Stapleton, R. Managing Creatively: Action Learning in Action. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1976.

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Richard Stapleton, D.B.A., is [redacted] Professor of Management, Georgia Southern College, Statesboro, Georgia; and a Special Fields Member of ITAA; and is Coordinator of Richard Stapleton and Associates, a management and education consulting firm. He has written a book, Managing Creatively: Action Learning in Action (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1976), and several articles in journals such as PERSONNEL, SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT, and the ATLANTA ECONOMIC REVIEW.

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